

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LONDON 03054 232342Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 CCO-00 /026 W
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Z 232333Z FEB 78 ZFF 4
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC FLASH 3503

S E C R E T LONDON 03054

EXDIS

EYES ONLY FOR WISNER AND HOUGHTON
FROM MOOSE

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
SUBJECT: TALKING POINTS ON RHODESIA FOR SECRETARY'S
BREAKFAST WITH PRESIDENT

1 -- BOTH WE AND THE BRITISH HAVE ESTABLISHED A NON-
NEGATIVE, OPEN-MINDED BUT BASICALLY WAIT-AND-SEE
ATTITUDE TOWARD THE SALISBURY TALKS;
2 -- OUR MEETINGS WITH OWEN IN LONDON HAVE REVEALED
THAT WHILE BOTH GOVERNMENTS MUST TAKE ACCOUNT OF THE
UNCRITICAL PUBLIC RECEPTION OF SMITH'S "AGREEMENTS"
WITH MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE, THE SALISBURY TALKS MAY BE
FAR LESS PROMISING THAN IS POPULARLY ASSUMED;
3 -- DESPITE APPARENT AGREEMENT ON CERTAIN "PRINCIPLE
IT IS INCREASINGLY CLEAR THAT THE PROCEDURAL ARRANGEMEN
WHICH SMITH IS PREPARED TO AGREE TO -- EVEN IF MUZOREWA
AND SITHOLE ACCEPT THEM, WHICH IS BY NO MEANS CLEAR --
MAY NOT RESULT IN EFFECTIVE RELINQUISHMENT OF WHITE
CONTROL OVER RHODESIA IN THE NEAR FUTURE;
4 -- HAVING NOW SUCCESSFULLY PROTECTED HIS FLANKS
AGAINST THE INITIAL CONSERVATIVE ONSLAUGHT, OWEN NOW
RECOGNIZES THE DANGERS INHERENT IN TOO PRECIPITOUS

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AN EMBRACE OF AN AGREEMENT WHICH MAY NOT MATERIALIZE
OR WHICH MAY PROVE TO BE HOLLOW;
5 -- IRONICALLY, AFTER BEING FRUSTRATED BY THE
PATRIOTIC FRONT'S DEMAND THAT POWER BE HANDED OVER TO
THEM, WE NOW FACE THE DANGER THAT MUZOREWA AND SITHOLE
WILL BE SO THIRSTY FOR EVEN PARTIAL POWER THAT THEY WILL
ACCEPT TERMS WHICH WILL MAKE CONTINUED AND INCREASINO

CONFLICT INEVITABLE;

6 -- A SIGNIFICANT CREATIVE ASPECT OF OWEN'S APPROACH TO THE ONGOING SALISBURY TALKS IS HIS URGING SITHOLE TO INSIST UPON THE INCLUSION IN ANY AGREEMENT OF CERTAIN PRINCIPLES WHICH WOULD MAKE FOR AN EFFECTIVE TRANSFER OF POWER, THUS ENHANCING THE ACCEPTABILITY OF ITS RESULT. WE HAVE AGREED TO JOIN HIM IN URGING MUZOREWA TO ADOPT A SIMILAR APPROACH;

7 -- BOTH WE AND THE BRITISH SEE A VERY SERIOUS LONG TERM DANGER THAT A BOGUS INTERNAL SETTLEMENT COULD CREATE A SITUATION IN SOUTHERN AFRICA WHICH THE SOVIETS AND CUBANS COULD EXPLOIT AS THEY DID IN ANGOLA AND MOZAMBIQUE -- AND WHICH COULD COST US THE TENUOUS RELATIONSHIP OF TRUST WHICH WE HAVE ESTABLISHED SINCE THE OUTSET OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WITH AFRICA;

8 -- WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT ULTIMATELY THE FRONT LINE STATES HOLD THE KEY TO WHETHER THE RHODESIAN CONFLICT WILL CONTINUE AND HOW FAR IT MIGHT ESCALATE. IT IS ONLY WITH THEIR AGREEMENT OR ACQUIESCENCE THAT SOVIETS AND CUBANS WOULD BE ABLE TO EXPLOIT THE CONFLICT FOR THEIR OWN ENDS. FOR THIS REASON, IT IS ABSOLUTELY CRUCIAL THAT WE CONTINUE OUR EFFORTS TO MAINTAIN OUR CREDIBILITY WITH THEM AND TO TRY TO BRING THEM ALONG IN WHATEVER COURSE WE MAY EVENTUALLY DECIDE IT IS NECESSARY FOR US TO PURSUE. IN THE FINAL ANALYSIS, OUR WILLINGNESS TO DEAL WITH THEM HONESTLY, OPENLY AND IN SECRET

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GOOD FAITH MAY PROVE MORE IMPORTANT THAN WHETHER OUR FALTERING INITIATIVES SUCCEED OR FAIL.

BREWSTER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, BRIEFING MATERIALS, DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 23 feb 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978LONDON03054
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X2
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780084-1058
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780223/aaaaatbc.tel
Line Count: 98
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 83609ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 10 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3507710
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: TALKING POINTS ON RHODESIA FOR SECRETARY'S BREAKFAST WITH PRESIDENT 1 -- BOTH WE AND THE BRITISH HAVE ESTABLISHED A
TAGS: PDEV, RH, UK
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/83609ed1-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014